GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(The National Geographic Society is a scientific and educational Society, wholly altruistic, incorporated under the Federal law as a non-commercial institution for the increase of geographic knowledge and its popular diffusion.)

General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

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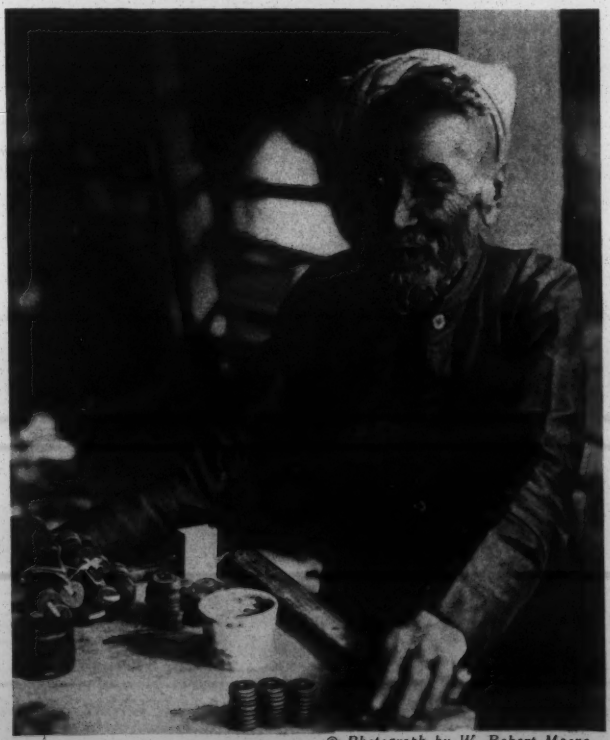

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A CHINESE MONEY CHANGER OF NORTHERN SIAM

(See Bulletin No. 2)

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

The Geographic News Bulletins are published weekly throughout the school year (thirty issues) and will be mailed to teachers for one year upon receipt of 25 cents (in stamps or money order). Entered as second-class matter, January 27, 1922, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized February 9, 1922.

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Armament Conference Delegates Meet in the Heart of London

LORD NELSON, England's greatest naval hero, will look down daily from his pillar in Trafalgar Square upon the delegates, aides, and newspaper men going to meetings of the naval armament conference being held in St. James Palace near the heart of London.

"Trafalgar Square is the natural center of London for the adventurer," writes Herbert Corey in a communication to the National Geographic Society.

"It is true that Charing Cross, a long stone's throw down the Strand, is accepted as the geographical center, if there can be a geographical center of a map which is messed about as is that of London by the oxbow bend of the River Thames.

Nelson's Column the North Pole to Visitor's Compass

"But Nelson's Column, in Trafalgar Square, is the North Pole to the visitor's compass. If he were able to mount to Nelson's eminence, as steeplejacks sometimes do, and there revolve upon his heel, he would discover that each quarter turn would reveal a new aspect.

"Down Whitehall is the ancient City of Westminster, with the Houses of Parliament and the Abbey.

"The Strand opens to Fleet Street and the offices of the great newspapers.

"Over Covent Garden, a bit more to the left, one might sight the Bank of England and the heart of the old Roman city.

"Another turn left and the markets, the Charterhouse, the British Museum.

Eight Streets Pour Traffic into Trafalgar Square

"Left once more and the theater district; Soho, where are the foreign restaurants beloved of novelists, and the fashionable shopping districts.

"Just a bit more and clubland and Mayfair and a glance at Buckingham Palace.

"Then Hyde Park and the Admiralty, and the circle is complete.

"Trafalgar Square is a place of perilous delights. Eight streets, if my count is correct, debouch upon it, each filled with roaring traffic coming from unexpected angles, and made more perilous to an American by the English insistence upon the lefthand turn.

"One leaps from safety island to safety island across these streets, as if they were stepping stones in a torrent—omnibuses, steam lorries, donkey carts, limousines, the small, barn-swallowlike cars which taxation has thrust upon English motordom, brewers' vans drawn by elephantine horses, screaming motorcycles with the latest editions.

St. Martin's-in-the-Fields Is Not in the Field Any More

"Once Trafalgar Square was the King's Mews, where various monarchs stabled their horses. Honest artisans shaped weapons for English gamecocks in Cockspur Street. Fronting on the Square is the National Gallery, crammed with treasures of art. Of all the 1,500-odd churches in London, the visitor is apt to carry away the most vivid memory of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. The gray and white and black pillars of its majestic portico gain added value, of course, when seen across the open Square.

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CROWDS GATHERED IN FRONT OF BUCKINGHAM PALACE

The Mall, which runs out of the lower left-hand corner on the illustration following Bulletin No. 1, comes in at the upper left-hand corner of this illustration. St. James Palace, where the Naval Armament Conference will meet, can be seen in the upper left-hand corner (See Bulletin No. 1).

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Silver-Lined Pachuca, Mexico

A CRISIS in silver is the cause of concern in three countries.

Mexico, China and India seem to have little in common, but they now face the same economic problem.

A severe drop in the price of silver bullion has hurt the mining business which is so important to Mexico. China's currency is based on the Mexican silver dollar, which the crisis has reduced to lower value. India has been for ages a "silver" country and great quantities of the metal are used and hoarded by its millions of people. Therefore, the drop in silver has hit India, too.

The Mine That Made a Muleteer a Count

Nowhere is "silver" news more eagerly read than in Pachuca, Mexico.

One of Pachuca's silver mines, the Real del Monte, contained the counterpart of Nevada's famous Comstock Lode, which, as everyone knows, is the accepted synonym for mining riches; and the wealth of romance and adventure that has sprung from it has rivaled the metallic treasure.

An inconspicuous muleteer became the owner of the mine in 1739 when its value was unknown. His pick opened up a bonanza vein such as seldom has been uncovered. Soon he was a multimillionaire in a day when even millionaires were rare. He presented several fully equipped warships to the king of Spain and for his happy thought was made a count—Conde de Santa Maria de Regla. This Mexican "Count of Monte Cristo" spent his millions with a lavish hand and his memory is cherished in Mexican traditions.

Subterranean River Burst in and Drowned the Mine

The famous mine came to a tragic end soon after the Count's rise to fortune, by the bursting into it of a subterranean river. Its drowned riches remained untouched until near the middle of the nineteenth century when efforts to reopen it by British engineers led to frenzied speculation and a crash among London investors.

Local Pachucans bought up the bankrupt company and promptly found a second bonanza vein even richer than the first. Silver valued at more than 80 million pesos (about $40,000,000) has been taken from the second vein.

Pachuca's mining fame does not rest alone on the Real del Monte Mine. The town lies in a big gulch with hills rising on three sides. The slopes of these hills are honeycombed with hundreds and hundreds of mine tunnels. Outside of each is a characteristic terrace of gray stone tailings.

A Mining "Camp" Since 1534

In the town are reduction works, assay offices and the other inevitable accompaniments of mining in every part of the world. Most of the 40,000 inhabitants of Pachuca are connected in one way or another with the dominant industry and the place has the appearance of a mining "camp" which, in truth, it has been since the first shaft was sunk in 1534.

In the hills near Pachuca is an exposure of great, six-sided, basaltic columns which has been termed "the Giant's Causeway of America." Mexico City lies less than 75 miles to the south of Pachuca.

Note: See also "The Geography of Money" (31 illustrations), *National Geographic Magazine*, December, 1927.

Bulletin No. 2, February 3, 1930.

"But there is something more, or so it seems to me. Americans are often charged with an undue interest in royalty, for our critics do not comprehend that we regard a king as a spectacle, just as we do the Lord Mayor's Procession or a Beefeater in the Tower. Yet for one American who knows that the king owns a pew in St. Martin's, and that the royal children born in Buckingham Palace are registered along with the sons and daughters of charwomen and night watchmen who also see daylight in Buckingham Parish, ten know that Nell Gwyn lies buried there."

Bulletin No. 1, February 3, 1930.

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A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF TRAFALGAR SQUARE

The white spire of the Church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields appears above the black finger of Nelson's Column. To the left of the column, facing the Square, stretches the facade of the National Art Gallery; to the right is the canyon of the Strand. The Admiralty Arch, lower center, opens into the Mall that runs past St. James Palace to Buckingham Palace (See Illustration facing Bulletin No. 1).

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The Cables That Run Along the Atlantic's Uneven Floor

FISHING on the bottom where the bottom is two miles down was the recent experience of cable repair ships sent out to repair the damage to transatlantic cable lines wrought by the off-shore earthquake of November 17, 1929.

Of the twelve cables broken, two had been restored after almost two months' hard work in stormy seas. Eight cable repair ships are reported to be spending weeks mending the strands of wire that lie on the ocean bottom.

Almost nothing was known of the floor of the Atlantic before the work of laying the first cable was begun in 1857. Later, in the eighteen-seventies, came careful oceanographic surveys by British, German and American scientific expeditions, and gradually the world gained a knowledge of the unseen basins and valleys, the ridges and plateaus and mountain ranges that make up the floor of the Atlantic. The practical work of the cable ships in connection with the laying of the 21 cables that now cross the North Atlantic has filled in many of the details.

Best Cable Route Chosen by Accident

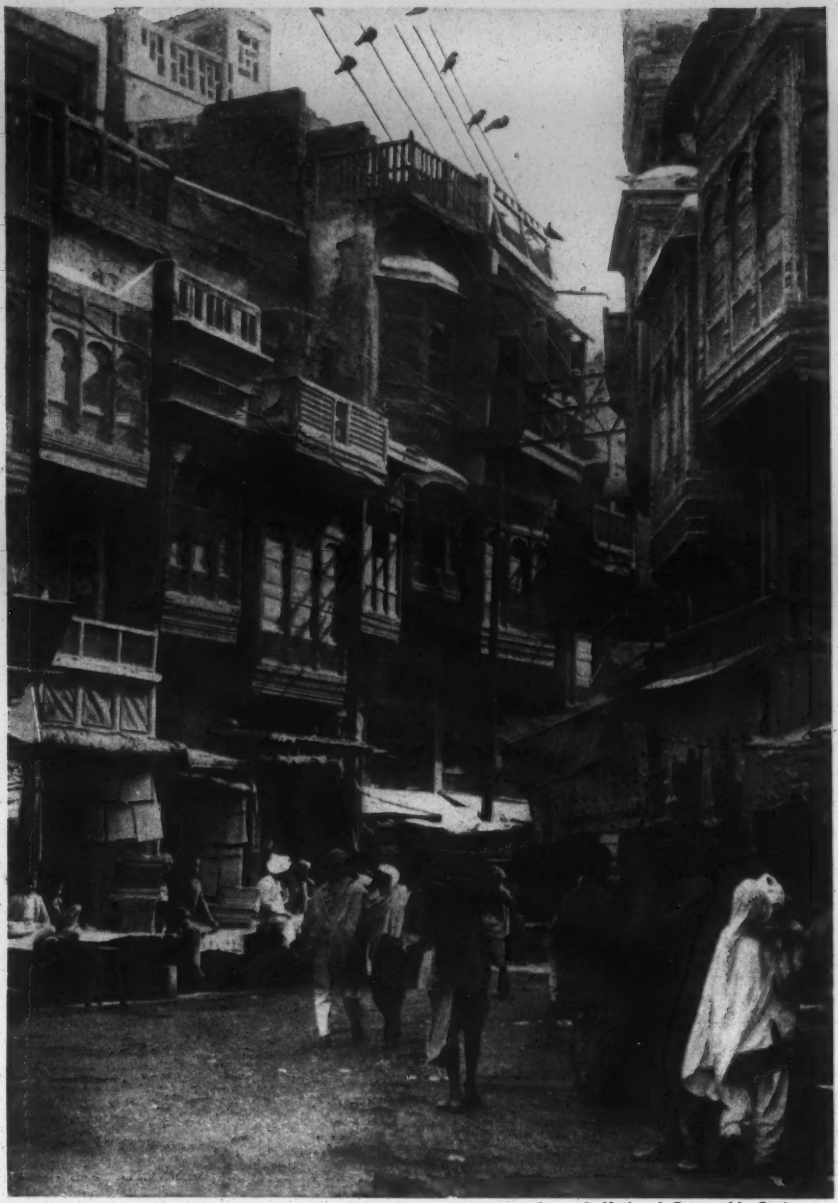
When the first effort was made to connect Europe and America by cable in 1857, the most favorable underwater route was chosen largely by accident because it happened to lie under the narrowest portion of the North Atlantic. Later surveys disclosed the existence of an underwater plateau in this region between Newfoundland and Ireland. The depths over this upland range from a little over a quarter mile to two and a half miles. This seems deep enough, perhaps, to the layman, but a short distance to the south and to the northeast are depressions between three and four miles deep.

The under-sea upland that stretches across from Newfoundland to Ireland was recognized to be so valuable for cable laying purposes that it was named "Telegraph Plateau." Not only is it an asset because of the relatively shallow water and the resulting comparatively low pressure to which submerged cables are subjected, but the very nature of the material of the bottom is such as to help protect the cables. It is a soft ooze formed from the rotted shells and skeletons of innumerable small sea creatures, which serves as a cushion and a protective covering for the cables.

"Telegraph Plateau" Supports Large Group of Cables

In the early days of cable laying, when the technique of manufacturing the cables had not been developed and when cables were neither so strong nor so well insulated as they are now, the "Telegraph Plateau" was invaluable. Now cable making has advanced to such a point that it is possible to make cables so sturdy and well insulated that they can be laid in water four or five miles deep. There the pressure amounts to several tons per square inch instead of the 15 pounds per square inch that materials are subjected to above the surface of the sea. When laying a cable at such depths the weight of the cable from ship to bottom causes a tremendous pull. It is still much cheaper to make cables for moderate depths and to lay and maintain them there.

Fourteen of the 21 cables that now cross the North Atlantic make use of the "Telegraph Plateau"; but, the other seven have been plunged boldly into the



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LAHORE LOOKS LIKE A CITY OUT OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

Except for the telephone wires, the streets of Lahore, where the Indian congress recently met and declared for independence, seem to possess splendid possibilities for mystery and strange scenes that we associate with Baghdad under the Caliphs. Lahore is one of the chief cities of the Punjab, in far northern India.

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France's Small Foothold in India

THE recent meeting at Lahore of the Indian congress serves to recall that three European nations administer India territory.

The three nations are Great Britain, France and Portugal. While Great Britain maintains sovereignty over nearly the entire region, France and Portugal hold small rights in and around certain ports.

Pondicherry, the principal possession and capital of French colonial India, lies on the railroad from Madras south to Cuddalore. It is 122 miles south of Madras. This dependency is the chief of five small colonies France controls in India.

Going Ashore in a Masulla a Thrilling Adventure

The charming seashore city of about 30,000 population, which is the chief town of Pondicherry, and bears the same name, seems to prove the blessedness of a lack of history. It has been two centuries since it participated in any events of more than local interest.

Leaving ship about a mile from shore the visitor has his first unusual experience by riding the rough surf in a *masullah*. The usual tender would be engulfed by the lofty breakers that crash against the Pondicherry coast. The type of boat used is built of long planks, with high sides and a flat bottom. The floor is lined with twigs to keep passengers' feet dry.

The trip has all the thrills of a roller-coaster spin, for the boat literally rides the waves instead of cutting through them. The planks are flexible and the queer boat can bump ship or shore and rebound like a rubber ball.

Another curious craft—a one-man car of the shore waters—is the catamaran. Three logs with upturned ends are lashed together and the surf-rider on this precarious float has a tall, peaked hat that looks like an elongated dunce-cap. Inside his hat are pockets for the letters and small parcels he carries.

The King Who Escaped in a Candy Basket

Although Pondicherry has no harbor its spacious pier gives first evidence of its modern aspect. At one end is a statue of a great general, Dupleix, hero of the siege of Gingee, India's inland Gibraltar. Surrounding the statue are carved columns, brought by him from the native fortress which was the stronghold of the Mahratta kings.

The romance of Mahratta history, the traditions of the Gingee stronghold, built on three hills, and the adventures of King Sivaji, from the time he escaped from a Mogul emperor in a confection basket until he became the King Arthur of his people, are events which vie with the Arabian Nights' tales.

When in 1750 the French captured the "impregnable" Gingee, alien control over Southern India was established and, 11 years later, when the British took the fortress from the French, the last vestige of French military prowess in India vanished. The three hills stand today off the beaten paths of travel, in the South Arcot district of Madras, as grim reminders of a fascinating chapter in colonial competition. The name of the region where Pondicherry lies—the Coromandel Coast—is a memento of the activities of the third power, Portugal, in India's colonization.

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deeper waters of the North American Basin, where the bottom lies three miles and more below the surface. These depths are encountered by the four cables that extend from Nova Scotia and Newfoundland to the Azores, by the two that extend directly from New York to the Azores, and by the one which strikes across the Atlantic from Cape Cod to Brest, France.

Life of a Cable Estimated To Be from 30 to 50 Years

Just how an underwater earthquake breaks a cable is not clear. Theoretically a break either in the cable or its insulation might be caused by a sideslip, the opening of a crevasse, the dropping away of a portion of the bottom, the sudden rise of a section of the ocean bed, or by a landslide from some ocean peak or bluff. Probably only very severe earthquakes can break a cable. The average earth tremor of the land surface which rattles dishes and even throws down chimneys would not damage a somewhat elastic cable lying along the ground.

Cables have a more or less definite life span, as have the rails of a railway. Even if they escape breakage by earthquakes, ship anchors, and the depredations of creatures of the sea, weak spots will be worn as a result of movement by currents or the insulating material will disintegrate with age, permitting salt water to be forced to the copper, thus opening a door for the escape of electricity. Then the cable "dies." The useful life of a cable is estimated to be from 30 to 50 years.

Bulletin No. 3, February 3, 1930.

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HE HAS MONEY TO BURN: FUKIEN, CHINA

Set afire and cast adrift on rivers in times of plague or calamity, this spirit money is supposed to appease the devils. Some of it is perforated with fine holes; and, says an old tale, if this money be cast on the ground, then pursuing devils must pause and pass through each little hole in the spirit money (See Bulletin No. 2).

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Poland's Progress in Ten Years

IN recognition of the close ties between the United States and Poland a bill has been recommended to Congress elevating the legation at Waszawa (Warsaw) to the status of an embassy.

In looking back on the past ten years Americans must feel considerable satisfaction in the part their country has played in the life of this resurrected nation. Most of the $70,000,000 loan that has put Poland on a firm financial footing came from the United States.

Old Polish Industries Revitalized with American Methods

American business methods have captured the imagination and admiration of the Poles, and scarcely a work on scientific management is published in America to-day that is not translated into Polish. Poland has industries that were begun before the discovery of America, but some of them are being rejuvenated by American methods under the guidance of American engineers.

Oldest of Poland's industries to be affected by new methods are her salt mines which were adding to the savor of Central European foods as early as the tenth century. The first iron forge began operations in 1333 and may be looked upon as the beginning of the iron founding industry which now contributes millions of dollars each year to Polish manufacture. An important lumber industry, based on timber lands covering 52,000 acres, was begun in the eighteenth century. A tree must be 90 years old before it is cut. The entire forest area of the country is more than 22,000,000 acres.

Poland Sixth in Size among European Nations

One of Poland's most interesting industries is a plant for building railway equipment that was started in Napoleonic times as a wagon factory. The textile industry keeps more than 3,000,000 spindles busy, and there are numerous factories for the manufacture of paper, chemicals, and metal articles.

Only Germany, her nearest western neighbor, exports more goods to Poland than does the United States. The latter furnishes approximately 12 per cent of all Polish imports. In size Poland, with 150,000 square miles, is sixth among European countries, being exceeded only by Russia, France, Spain, Germany and Sweden. It has a population of approximately 30,000,000, a total exceeded only by Russia, Germany, France and Italy.

American Friendship for Poland Dates from Revolutionary Times

America's traditional friendship for Poland dates from the time of the American Revolution when two young Poles, Kosciuszko and Pulaski, gave their services to General Washington and commanded American troops.

Among the important projects Poland is undertaking is a new harbor at Gdynia where the Polish corridor touches the Baltic Sea. Trade through Gdynia is already sapping the importance of the Free City of Danzig at the mouth of the Wisla (Vistula).

One of the ties between the United States and Poland is the American expert who advises the government on the subject of national finances.

Note: See also "Struggling Poland" (48 illustrations), *National Geographic Magazine*, August, 1926.

Bulletin No. 5, February 3, 1930.

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If the visitor has acquired the taxicab habit he will leave his *masullah* to step into another extraordinary conveyance, a *pousse-pousse*, which, in English, is aptly a "push-push." This chair resembles a boardwalk chair at a seaside resort except that in the land of cheap human labor two ebony attendants push it—and two more pull it.

Canal Divides City: European Quarter Clean and Orderly

It is really more comfortable to walk to one's hotel. The charm of the Place de la Republique, with its band playing in a central stand, and of the Place du Government, with its greensward and fountain and the public buildings around it, lures the newcomer.

The fountain has a story—everything has in Pondicherry—for it seems that here once stood the home of a dancing girl. A king chanced that way one evening and, mistaking her cottage for a shrine, the king stopped to worship there. When he discovered his mistake he ordered the cottage demolished, which was done, whereupon a fountain began to flow at that place.

The town is cut in halves by a canal and the European section is notably clean. Its streets are laid out at right angles instead of in the customary haphazard crooks and curves of the East. Many of them are tree-lined and a promenade runs along the waterfront. Few horse-drawn or motor vehicles traverse its streets; the quiet of the town is one of its quaint charms.

Note: Cross-currents of India life have been reported in the *National Geographic Magazine:* "Pathfinder of the East" (Vasco da Gama), November, 1927; "Streets and Palaces of Colorful India," July, 1926; "Fearful Famines of the Past," July, 1917; "From England to India by Automobile," August, 1925; "The Marble Dams of Rajputana," "Through the Heart of Hindustan," "Outwitting the Water Demons of Kashmir," November, 1921; "Tiger Hunting in India," November, 1924; "Houseboat Days in the Vale of Kashmir." "The Oriental Pageantry of Northern India," October, 1929; "Religious Penances and Punishments Self-Inflicted by the Holy Men of India," December, 1913.

Bulletin No. 4, February 3, 1930.

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THOUSANDS OF POLES GATHERED BEFORE THE OSTRA BRAMA CHAPEL

This chapel in Wilno is situated above the city's 16th-century town gate. This street is nearly always filled with kneeling worshipers, but the wonder-working image of the Virgin is not visible except during divine service, when the chapel windows are open.